



Dear Friends of Healthy Start:

As we are all aware, 2021 has been an especially tough year. Throw in a pandemic with those who were already struggling to survive. Babies in low-income families are suffering because many families can't afford diapers.

- 1 in 3 American families' reports experiencing diaper need.
- 5 million children in the U.S. aged three or younger live in poor or low-income families.
- Infants require up to 12 diapers per day, toddlers about 8.
- Disposable diapers can cost \$70 to \$80 per month per baby.
- No state or federal child safety-net program allocates dollars specifically for the purchase of diapers.
- Without transportation, buying diapers at a convenience store rather than a large "big box" store can significantly increase the monthly cost of diapers.
- Most childcare centers, even free and subsidized facilities, require parents to provide a day's supply of disposable diapers.

Healthy Start serves pregnant women and infants up to age 3. Imagine delivering a baby and having nothing prepared. No car seat, no diapers, no place to sleep. Sounds unimaginable, but this is our reality. Many families who were already living paycheck to paycheck have lost wages due to the pandemic. Public support programs help some, but babies have additional needs necessary to build a strong foundation for healthy growth and to reach their full potential. Healthy Start has stepped up to meet the basic needs of our smallest and most vulnerable residents. An average monthly supply of diapers costs \$80. With your help we can continue to provide the necessary items to keep babies safe, while also providing support and education to the parents. Sometimes, one pack of diapers will determine whether a baby is clean and cuddled with love, or abused for crying about something that is beyond their control.

Hosting a diaper drive is a great way to help babies in your community. We have the tools to get you started.

If you're interested in helping or hosting a diaper drive, here's how you can help:

- Agree to place a box in your building to receive diapers from staff and clients.
- Advertise to your staff that you are hosting a diaper drive.
- Encourage family and friends to purchase one pack of diapers.

- If you are unable to host a diaper drive, you can provide a monetary donation by visiting our website at <http://healthystartbaby.org/> and click on the GIVE button at the top right hand corner of our page.

We appreciate any donation, whether it be baby items or monetary. With the support of community leaders like yourself, we will be able to continue to serve this vulnerable population and ensure that every baby has a healthy start in life. Please call our office at (239)425-6920 or email us at info@healthystartswfl.com . We are happy to answer any questions.

We hope you and your staff have a wonderful holiday and wish you all good things in the New Year.

Sincerely,



Associate Executive Director

Healthy Start Coalition of Southwest Florida, Inc.
Fort Myers: 1921 Jefferson Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33901
Phone: (239) 425-6920 Fax: (239) 425-6921
E-mail: info@HealthyStartBaby.org Website: www.HealthyStartBaby.org

Registration #CH6091. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from to the Division of Consumer services by calling toll-free within the state 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352), or www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.